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DEPARTMENT FOR INL, EUR/SE, SA

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SUBJECT: LEVERAGING TURKISH EFFORTS AGAINST AFGHAN-
ORIGIN OPIATES

REF: Ambassador Wilson-A/S Patterson Meeting, 1/9/06

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Most of the world's supply of opiates originates in Afghanistan and passes through Turkey on its way to Western consumers. Despite Turkey's relatively low consumption problem, it has worked hard to stop the flow of these narcotics and is willing to take on a larger regional role. We believe there is an opportunity to enhance Afghan-Turkish cooperation on counternarcotics. If Embassy Kabul concurs, we think it would be useful to consider developing mechanisms that would facilitate Afghanistan's collaboration with Turkey. INL funding targeted to enhancing counternarcotics cooperation between Afghanistan and Turkey (and perhaps other Central Asian countries) would kill multiple birds with one stone: it would develop Afghan-Turkish synergies through collaborative efforts, enable Afghan law enforcement to learn from Turkish counterparts, and bolster Turkey's own efforts against drugs flowing from Afghanistan.

First Credible Line of Defense

¶2. (SBU) For a country with a negligible consumption problem, Turkey has taken ownership of the struggle against narcotics trafficking. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) calls Turkey the first credible line of defense as opiates move from Afghanistan to consumer markets in the west. In 2004, Turkey seized nearly 10,000 kilograms of heroin and 4,730 kilograms of morphine base. Between January and November 2005, Turkish law enforcement agencies seized 7,760 kilograms of heroin. On October 21, 2005, Turkish law enforcement seized a record 1,051 kilograms of heroin, which DEA believes is linked to a well-documented Pakistani trafficker. DEA notes that every seizure made in Turkey reduces the availability and profitability of Afghan heroin. In contrast to some of its regional peers, Turkey arrests, tries, and frequently convicts narcotics traffickers.

Turkey a Key Ally Against Afghan Heroin

¶3. (SBU) DEA's Ankara-based regional office, which covers 43 countries, cites Turkey as the most cooperative and engaged partner in stopping the flow of Afghan heroin. Turkey is one of the most committed partners in DEA's Operation Containment, developed

after September 11, 2001 to collectively target major regional drug trafficking organizations and combat the increasing threat posed by Afghan heroin. Turkey co-hosted the first multinational Operation Containment conference in 2002 and a major international Operation Containment meeting in 2004, in which high-ranking Afghan counternarcotics officials participated. Under Operation Containment, Turkey provided sensitive law enforcement information on a major Turkish drug trafficker, which led to a significant multilateral investigation with multiple high-level targets, including supply sources in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Turks Engage Afghans through Training Opportunities

14. (SBU) Turkey perceives Afghanistan's opiate cultivation and processing as its primary drug threat. To reduce this threat, the Turkish National Police (TNP), through its Ankara-based Turkish Academy Against Drugs and Organized Crime (TADOC), has hosted numerous training workshops involving Afghan law enforcement officers. DEA and FBI consider TADOC to be one of the premier training academies in the region. In 2003, 14 Afghan officers attended anti-drug and organized crime investigation training, and 13 officers attended the Anti-Narcotics Training Program for Management-Level Law Enforcement Officers. Six Afghan officers attended a DEA-sponsored Drug Unit Commanders School at TADOC in 2004, and 19 officers participated in drug law enforcement training at TADOC in 2005. TADOC has several training opportunities for Afghan officers lined up for 2006, including three drug enforcement

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training courses, a tactical police operations course, and a train the trainers course.

INL Funding Key to Turkey's Regional Role

15. (SBU) Turkish officials, the TNP in particular, are eager to take on a larger regional counternarcotics role. One way to support Turkey's highly effective efforts, and at the same time use Turkey's model of success to help less developed Afghan and Central Asian counternarcotics efforts, would be to increase Turkish collaboration with Central Asian countries, especially Afghanistan. Training is good; joint work would be better. TNP is very interested in working more closely with DEA and Afghan counterparts in Afghanistan, and would like to station a narcotics liaison officer in Kabul. In addition, TNP officials would be eager to travel to Afghanistan for temporary duty assignments to include training workshops, investigations, operations, and mentoring.

16. (SBU) We, of course, defer to Embassy Kabul on the facts, but our assessment is that the Afghans need all the help they can get on the counternarcotics side. They could benefit from more training that is closely connected with Turkey's status as a transit country. Communication between Afghan and Turkish counternarcotics personnel is limited. Both sides would benefit from more organized communication flows, including on handling ongoing intelligence, buttressed by joint training in how to collect, analyze, and use information relevant to the Afghan-Turkey drug trade. Training in and support of joint Afghan-Turkish counternarcotics operations would complete the picture and substantiate what could be really effective measures to interdict and stop narcotics trafficking through this area.

¶7. (SBU) INL funding could support a number of initiatives to jump start Afghan-Turkish collaboration. This could include bringing Turkish officials to Afghanistan for on-the-ground training and enhanced cooperation on counternarcotics; joint training Afghans with Turks in intelligence development, sharing, and utilization and in joint operations, taking advantage of Turkey's excellent training facilities; and/or the establishment and support of a Turkish-Afghan bilateral working group on counternarcotics that would aim to develop intelligence sharing and joint efforts. There may be other ways in which U.S. Afghan counternarcotics goals could be supported through an augmented Turkish role. Besides the direct benefits that joint Afghan-Turkish efforts might bring, U.S. support for the effort could provide collateral gains for our understanding of the path of Afghan narcotics, traffickers, and how to interdict shipments.

Comment

¶8. (SBU) While Turkey is a strong ally against the flow of Afghan heroin, it is not reaching its full potential. INL funding would for the above-described activities would bolster Turkish counternarcotics efforts, increase cross-border coordination against trafficking networks, and at the same time enabling less developed Afghan and other Central Asian law enforcement agencies to learn from their Turkish counterparts.

WILSON